

The SuAsCo Council is comprised of representatives from business and industry; municipal government; environmental organizations; and state, federal and regional agencies. This community-based alliance is a unique non-profit organization whose mission is accomplished through education and collaboration.

In 2006, the Executive Office of Environment Affairs approved the SuAsCo Watershed Action Plan (WAP). The WAP identifies the priority issues in the SuAsCo Watershed and the top actions needed over the next 5 years to address those problems and improve the watershed's environmental health. The Plan is driven by existing municipal reports and research data, as well as by public opinion. The FINAL Watershed Action Plan is available on the Council's website (click the link; PDF file is 10 MB).

The SuAsCo Council sponsors the "Stormwater Community Assistance Program (SWCAP)" which annually provides outreach materials to municipalities to address two of the six minimum control measures under the federally mandated Stormwater Phase II Regulations: Public Education & Outreach and Public Participation & Involvement. The Council has assembled a team of diverse watershed professionals including engineering consultants, municipal and state officials, science teachers, and interested citizens to create the annual SWCAP outreach materials, and tailor them to each town. Simply by practicing the "good housekeeping tips" found on the Stormwater Matters website (www.stormwatermatters.org), stormwater will be cleaner as it flows into our lakes and rivers. Cleaning up stormwater not only benefits your neighborhood, it also benefits the entire network of water bodies and land that make up our watershed. We all need clean water for drinking, swimming, fishing, boating, and for protecting wildlife.

In December of 2008, the SuAsCo Council held its 10th annual River Visions watershed-wide public forum. The 2008 Forum was entitled "Greening the SuAsCo Watershed: LEED, LID and Other Tools for Responding to Climate Change". The forum focused on the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles for constructing resource efficient buildings, Low Impact Development (LID) for managing stormwater, and other sustainable development strategies.

Selectman Kathy Farrell is Stow's representative to the SuAsCo Steering Committee. For more information about the SuAsCo Watershed Community Council, please call Nancy Bryant, Executive Director at 978-461-0735 or via email at info@suasco.org, or visit the SuAsCo Council's website at www.suasco.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Farrell, Selectman and Stow SuAsCo Representative

OUR HERITAGE

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Commission celebrated the 325th year since Stow's incorporation. In keeping with the occasion, we sponsored blacksmith Dean Rantz, who demonstrated his skill again in front of the Larsen Blacksmith Shop next to Center School during Spring Fest. Members of the Historical Commission's Textile History subcommittee demonstrated spinning and weaving. In August, we awarded a special "Stow 325" certificate to the most historical float in the Lake Boon Boat Parade.

We continued to work on plans for a new inventory of historical sites to replace the now out-dated 1983 inventory. Community Preservation Funds will be requested to help pay for this project. Work continues on determining the fate of the Larsen Blacksmith Shop.

Additional restoration of stone walls at the Lower Village Cemetery was completed by the beginning of the winter season. Community Preservation Act funds as approved by Town Meeting paid for the labor. We were very pleased with the results and are appreciative of the efforts of the Cemetery Committee and

CPC in carrying this forward. We were asked for information regarding the use of CPA funds for repairs to the First Parish Church, necessitating a site visit to the steeple of the church. Information from the state on former church projects that used CPA funds were provided by church representatives. Additionally, we made a site visit to the Whitney Homestead in September, resulting from inquiries by the Stow Council on Aging as they considered requesting the town to purchase it for their use.

The Historical Commission was pleased to be instrumental in arranging for Dr. Donald Freeman Brown to be presented with the historic Boston Post Cane as the oldest Stow resident.

Once again, the Historical Commission sponsored events at the Stow West School Museum. Four summer Sunday programs were sponsored in part by the Stow Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The first program was “A Hundred Years Ago Today,” celebrating events of the year 1908, and what life was like in a small New England town at that time. We were honored with the visit of Dr. Brown, who was born in 1908. The second program, “For the Children’s Sake,” celebrated children and their toys and clothes“ in the old days.” Whimsical Old-time music was provided by the group “October Rose.” In August, we had another successful “ice cream festival” with homemade peach ice cream made on the spot to music provided by the Stow Minutemen. In September, Jennifer Hofmann returned to her role as the teacher of a one-room school.

The Stow West School also hosted visitors from Stow Council on Aging and from Steppingstones School—our visitors come in all ages! We are once again grateful to the Girl Scouts of Troop 2527 for helping to clean the school house and, under the guidance of Janet Kresl Moffat, expand a garden of native plants.

The Commission has made plans to renew the historical plaque program. Beginning in 2009 local residents will be able to apply for markers for their historical structures, which, upon approval, they will be able to obtain through a New England vendor. Our first plaque will be placed on the Stow West School. Instructions for obtaining plaques will be available early in 2009 and request forms will be available at Spring Fest.

We ended the year with a Yuletide celebration cosponsored by the Ancient Documents Committee and the Stow Historical Society with music provided by the Stow Minutemen.

We miss our long time chairman, John Makey, who stepped down to associate membership when his term expired in July. Linda Stokes, our representative to Community Preservation Committee, moved up to full membership on the commission. Ralph Fuller, the author of the popular Stow Independent column “325 Things About Stow,” came on to the board as an associate member.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne Fletcher
Karen Gray
Susan McLaughlin
Joe Mishley
Linda Stokes

Lewis Halprin, Associate member
John Makey, Associate member
Robert McDonald, Associate member
Douglas Moffat, Associate member
Janet Kresl Moffat, Associate member
Bill Byron

Ralph Fuller, Associate member

ANCIENT DOCUMENTS COMMITTEE

The Ancient Documents Committee entered its 35th year of organizing, cataloging and preserving town records in the Town Vault. Many thanks go to Linda Hathaway, Town Clerk, for her support and enthusiastic interest in Stow history.

Gifts were received from Marion Fletcher, William Whitman of Falmouth, MA, Hartley family, Caroline Collings, Martha Perkins, Elizabeth Currier Barclay of Lexington and Frank Jensen.

Genealogical information was researched for the following names: Boaz and Edward Brown, Osborn and Gibson families, John Brown, Alice Brown, Deacon John Whitman and the Gates family. A gift of two volumes of genealogical records of the Gates families of America was received from Edward Charles Gates of Florida.

Members assisted the Stow Historical Society in the refurbishing of the historical china display upstairs at Randall Library. Many thanks go to Serena Furman of Stow, professional museum designer and consultant, for her advice and hands-on commitment.

Both Lew Halprin and Ralph Fuller, committee members, have been submitting columns on Stow history to the local newspaper, using research materials from the Town Vault. Halprin initially wrote a column called "From the Vault" for another newspaper, and now writes "Past Tense" for the Stow Independent. Also for the Independent, Fuller writes "325 Things to Know About Stow," to mark the 325th anniversary of this town in 2008. Both are very readable columns highlighting events, people, facts and figures from Stow's history.

Using material from the Town Vault, members presented a program in March for third grade students from Center School, based on a children's story written about Charles Gleason, one of three stories about young boys in Stow in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, written by Martha Perkins at the time of Stow's Tercentenary. Committee members also cooperated in a dramatic production, "The Time Trap," based on the same children's stories and produced by The Militia Circle-Farm Road and Stow Youth Players. The presentation took place during Springfest, marking Stow's 325th anniversary.

The committee meets the first and third Fridays, October through June. New members who have an interest in Stow history are welcome.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Sipler, Chair
Karen Gray
Karen Green
Lew Halprin
Bob Walrath
Linda Hathaway, Ex-officio

Bill Byron, Associate
Bill Clack, Associate
Ralph Fuller, Associate
Liz Moseley, Associate
Jody Newman, Associate
Dorothy MacDonald, Genealogist